

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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**UNALAKLEET RIVER SUBDISTRICT 6 SUBSISTENCE FISHERY
RESTRICTIONS BEGIN MONDAY, JULY 8**

As expected, the Chinook salmon run to the Unalakleet River drainage is showing very late timing and poor initial run strength. As of July 1, a total of 31 Chinook salmon have been enumerated at the mainstem Unalakleet River weir. North River tower has not been operational since July 1 due to high water levels. However, the Unalakleet River mainstem comprises 45–60% of the drainagewide escapement, which suggests the projected North River Chinook salmon escapement is likely to fall short of the tower-based escapement goal range of 1,200–2,600 fish. Therefore, additional conservation measures are necessary if there is to be any chance of meeting Chinook salmon escapement needs in the Unalakleet River drainage.

Effective 8:00 p.m. Saturday, July 6, all waters of the Unalakleet River drainage will be closed to subsistence fishing with set gillnets by emergency order until midnight Sunday evening, July 21. After 8:00 p.m. Saturday, July 6, subsistence users may continue to use beach seines to target salmon other than Chinook salmon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, but Chinook salmon must be immediately returned to the water alive and unharmed.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Monday, July 8, subsistence salmon fishing in all marine waters of Norton Sound Subdistrict 6, the Unalakleet Subdistrict, will be restricted to set gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or less. The marine subsistence fishing schedule of two 24-hour periods per week will remain in effect through Sunday, July 14. Periods from July 8–14 will be from 6:00 p.m. Monday, July 8 to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 9 and from 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 12 to 6:00 p.m. Saturday, July 13. At midnight, Sunday evening, July 14, the subsistence fishery schedule expires and fishermen will be allowed to fish in the marine waters 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, subsistence fishing with set gillnets in the marine waters will continue to be restricted to set gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or less until midnight, Sunday evening, July 21. Escapement counts of Chinook salmon will be evaluated in the coming days to determine if restrictions can be relaxed and more subsistence opportunity can be allowed.